MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1939.

The fifth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1940 was held in the office of Shreve, Lamb and Harmon, Architects, New York City, on Thursday, December 14, 1939. The following members were present:

Mr. Clarke, Chairman,
Mr. Lamb,
Mr. Manship,
Mr. Borie,
Mr. Savage,
also M. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary and Administrative Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a. m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING: The Minutes of the Meeting held November 17, 1939, were approved.

2. LANDSCAPE PLAN, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART: The secretary presented a planting plan for the National Gallery of Art received from Mr. Alfred Geiffert, landscape architect for the National Gallery of Art. The plan had been called to the attention of Mr. Clarke, who had requested the secretary to report on the condition of the trees on the east side of the gallery. This he did as follows:

December 11, 1939.

Memorandum for Mr. Clarke:

Subject: Planting Plan, National Gallery of Art.

This afternoon Mr. Kline (representing National Park Service) and I inspected the trees on the east side of the National Gallery of Art grounds and checked over the trees that you had indicated on the attached sketch. They are all in place excepting two--a 21-inch maple near Constitution Avenue and Fourth Street and a 15-inch elm near Constitution Avenue. One 20-inch elm near the Mall Drive and Fourth Street was not shown on the sketch.

However, all of these trees excepting three or four look badly storm damaged. Some of them are very poor in appearance. Three of the trees had been moved to the grounds from old Missouri Avenue and one of these is practically dead. The old sycamore is the largest of them all but is also badly storm damaged. The 20-inch elm on the axis of the east end of the gallery is not very good and should be removed. The elms and maples in general have a height of 35 to 40 feet and it would seem that they were planted fully 30 to 40 years ago.

All of the trees are green except the 18-inch elm near the Mall Drive, which was moved to the grounds and is practically dead.

Mr. Kline was of the opinion that the trees are green, butin view of their deformed condition and also diseased condition in a few instances, it would be best to remove the trees if funds are available to buy new 10-12 inch elm trees similar to those which have recently been planted along Constitution Avenue adjacent to the Apex Building.

All the trees on Fourth Street as indicated on the sketch are alive but have been badly damaged by storm. There is a similar row of trees on the east side of Fourth Street. Mr. Jeffers (National Capital Park & Planning Commission) told me this afternoon that they have no plan for widening Fourth Street, between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Mall.

M. P. Caemmerer, Secretary.

The Commission discussed the subject and agreed that the trees should be placed informally on the east side of the gallery, that as many of the existing trees as possible should be saved and that paths should be adjusted to the trees. It was agreed also that the existing trees should be trimmed.

Mr. Clarke indicated certain desirable changes in the plan. This was returned to Mr. Geiffert with a report. (Exhibit A)

3. CERAMICS FOR THE MUNICIPAL CENTER: Mr. Nathan C. Wyeth, Municipal Architect, requested the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts concerning a program of competition for the ceramics proposed for the Municipal Center Building. A telegram had been received from Mr. Savage, in which Mr. Hanship had concurred, concerning the submission of samples of tile, as follows:

Regarding program for competition for ceramics in Municipal Building I wish to say that I agree with Mr. Manship that a sculptor should be included on the jury and further it is my opinion that Mr. Wyeth, the architect, should act as Chairman and vote in case of a tie. Further it seems like an unnecessary complication to require the preparation of colored tile before the awards are made. This part had better be delayed for later specification to be met by the successful contestant.

Mr. Wyeth had also recommended that both Mr. Savage and Mr. Manship serve on the jury for the competition.

The Commission discussed the program of competition and decided that hereafter it would be the policy of the Commission of Fine Arts that none of its members serve on a jury when the final decision rests with the Commission.

The Commission recommended that in addition to the jury members that had been suggested by Mr. Wyeth, Mr. Wyeth himself should serve as Chairman of the jury. Also that in accordance with the recommendation of Mr. Manship that a sculptor should serve on the jury, John Gregory or Lee Lawrie being satisfactory.

The Commission concurred in the criticism by Mr. Savage concerning samples of tile to be required of the competitors and decided that the samples of colored tile should be asked of only the two winning contestants. Mr. Savage said it would weaken the program of competition to require these samples in the program of competition from all the contestants and would place an undue burden upon them.

The secretary was requested to convey this information to Mr. Wyeth, which he did personally with an accompanying memorandum. (Exhibit B)

4. SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT SUBMISSIONS:

a. Alteration of doors at Kann's store. The Commission inspected a design for altering the doors at the entrance to Kann's Department Store at 8th Street and Market Place, N. W. On the recommendation of Mr. Lamb the design was approved.

b. Gasoline Service Station at 2643 Virginia Avenue, N. W. A design was received from the Building Inspector for a gasoline service station at 2643 Virginia Avenue, N. W. This received the attention of Mr. Lamb who disapproved it as being not in harmony with the city of Washington. A new design was requested. An ordinary stock type of rectangular building of concrete blocks and white stucco had been proposed.

5. STATUE OF LIBERTY NATIONAL MONUMENT: Mr. Thomas C. Vint, Chief Architect of the National Park Service, submitted a design for an administration building to be built on Bedloes Island as part of the scheme to improve the Statue of Liberty National Monument. Mr. Vint said the United States Government has appropriated $150,000 for it as a P. W. A. project. The administration building will be built at a new location away from the statue as well as also the concessionaire building and a comfort station. The location was noted on a plot plan.

Mr. Lamb inspected the design for the administration building and thought it was well done and upon his recommendation the Commission approved it.

Mr. Vint said it is proposed to build the structure of granite, at least giving it a granite veneer to be in harmony with the base of the Statue of Liberty. However, Mr. Vint said the use of granite will take 25 per cent of the appropriation, that is, $10,000 out of $40,000. The Commission agreed that granite would be very desirable to use but that if this is not possible, the flash brick which looks like granite (samples are in the office of the Commission) should be used. The Commission disapproved the use of exposed concrete.

Mr. Palmer, Superintendent of the Statue of Liberty National Monument, was present and stated that during the period from July 1 to September 1, 1939,

visitors, who come by boat from the Battery, averaged 3,400 a day, that is, 600 an hour or 200 every 20 minutes. Therefore, he said the building should be large enough to accommodate 200 people every 20 minutes. Mr. Vint stated the interior arrangements would be restudied with this in view.

Mr. Vint said that a heating plant will be built, inconspicuously located, which will heat the Statue of Liberty and prevent the condensation of moisture, a condition which now obtains. A report was sent to the National Park Service. (Exhibit C)

6. COLUMBIA ISLAND DEVELOPMENT: The National Park Service submitted a plan for the treatment of the south end of Columbia Island Plaza by the construction of roads similar to those at the north end. Mr. Clarke said that he made the plan for the plaza fully seven years ago, in 1932, when he became a member of the Commission. The roadways at the north end of the plaza have been built connecting with the Lee Highway. No planting has been done as yet.

The Commission approved the plan for the roadways at the south end of the plaza and concurred in the recommendation of the officials of the National Park Service to leave out the trees in the center panels at both ends of the plaza.

A report of approval was sent to the National Park Service. (Exhibit D)

7. BARNEY CIRCLE (17TH AND PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, S. E.): The National Park Service submitted a memorandum (Exhibit E) with landscape plan for treatment of Barney Circle at 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, S. E.

The secretary reported that the south end of the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge had been opened with appropriate ceremonies on Saturday afternoon, December 9, and had been dedicated as the John Philip Sousa Bridge in accordance with the recent act of Congress. The southern half of the bridge is 22 feet wide with a six-foot sidewalk. The northern half is now under construction and is to be completed in about a year.

Mr. Clarke called attention to the fact that he had never favored this scheme but conditions were such that the plan presented seemed to be the best that can be done in the circumstances.

Mr. Clarke indicated a number of desirable changes in the design, namely, omitting the fountain, omitting bushes and instead of planting trees in a semi-circle, let them be planted at the north and south ends of the plaza. Mr. Clarke noted a few other changes in matters of detail.

After discussion the plan was approved in principle with the request that detailed drawings be submitted of the architecture, the planting and the general layout. A report was sent to the National Park Service. (Exhibit E-1)

8. OSCAR STRAUS MEMORIAL: The Commission were in conference with Otto Eggers concerning a revised design for the Oscar Straus Memorial. Mr. Manship said he had disapproved the revised sketch that had been submitted by Mr. Eggers last month since the matter had not been given sufficient study. The original scheme, Mr. Manship said, had charm and freedom in relation to the architecture. Mr. Eggers said the original design was so large that it would not be possible to build it with the funds available. The sculpture is prohibitive in price, requiring $80,000 out of a total of $200,000.

After discussion it was agreed that in a revised design the central portion of the composition should be kept open and that simpler sculpture should be indicated at the north and south ends of the memorial. It was agreed that the fountain feature should be preserved. Reclining figures were mentioned for the sculpture. It was pointed out that the sculptural groups should be so designed that they will look well in silhouette from any point of the compass.

Mr. Manship said the statuary might be executed in metal, such as stainless steel or Benedict nickel and that Mr. Weinman could be depended upon to make a good model. A report was sent to Mr. Eggers. (Exhibit F)

9. STATUES FOR THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION BUILDING: The Chairman called attention to a letter received from Mr. Edward Bruce concerning the statues for the Apex Building, which indicated that the recommendations of the Commission of Fine Arts would be followed. (Exhibit G)

10. RELOCATION OF THE STATUE OF JOHN MARSHALL: The Chairman called attention to a letter received from Mr. Justice Stone of the U. S. Supreme Court (Exhibit H) to the effect that the Supreme Court would agree to having the statue of John Marshall placed in the marble hall of the Supreme Court Building provided Congress enacts the necessary legislation and makes the necessary appropriation available. The secretary was requested to send copies of the letter to Senator Barkley and Congressman Keller and this was done.

11. SMITHSONIAN GALLERY OF ART: Mr. Borie reported concerning the matter of the Smithsonian Gallery of Art Commission meeting in Washington last week. He said nothing was done in the matter of the proposed building. Mr. Borie called attention to correspondence on the subject, a copy of which had been sent to Mr. Clarke. (Exhibit I)

12. TREASURY ANNEX: The Chairman called attention to a letter received from Mr. Moore on the subject of a plan for the Treasury Annex (Exhibit J) and stated that he had asked Mr. Caemmerer to endeavor to bring a copy of the old plans to the meeting. The secretary said he had asked Mr. Simon for a set of plans for the Treasury Annex but that Mr. Simon had not been able to furnish them but would arrange to have them for discussion at the January meeting of the Commission. Mr. Caemmerer submitted a set of photostatic copies of Mr. Gilbert's plans, which appeared in the Architectural Review of December 1920.

The Commission discussed the general scheme concerning the extension of the building to H Street. Mr. Lamb felt that the facade could be improved, but

it was agreed that the existing cornice line of the Lafayette Park should be maintained.

The discussion brought up the subject of treatment of the left side of Lafayette Square and it was felt that if the historical Madison House must be torn down at Madison Place and H Street on the east side of the Square there should be no objection to tearing down a historical building on the west side of the Square to make room for a proposed State Department Building. The Secretary reported that the old State, War and Navy Building is being almost entirely occupied by Executive offices (516 employees) and that the State Department is greatly in need of additional office space.

The Commission adjourned at 2:30 p. m. The Commission had as their guests at the Century Club: Mr. Howells, Mr. Jennewein and Mr. Mahonri Young.

COPY

December 15, 1939.

Mr. Alfred Geiffert, Jr.,
101 Park Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Geiffert:

On December fourteenth, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed planting plans which you submitted for the National Gallery of Art. Upon receipt of these plans at the Commission office some few days prior to the meeting, it was observed that you have recommended cutting down a number of large trees at the east end of the property between the Gallery and 4th Street. Accordingly, the Secretary caused an inspection of these trees to be made in the field by Mr. Kline, a representative of the National Park Service, and I attach herewith a report which the Secretary presented to the Commission at the meeting.

It will be observed that a number of these trees which you designated for removal are in good condition. These should be retained. Others are either dead or in bad condition and may be removed. The street trees along 4th Street are not under the jurisdiction of the Trustees of the Mellon Gallery, and I expect may not be removed without permission from the proper authority in the District of Columbia. You will note that the Planning Commission advises that there are no plans for widening 4th Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Mall.

The Commission feel that the semicircular row of elms outlining the circular walks which approach the gallery from (a) the junction of Constitution Avenue and 4th Street and (b) the junction of the Mall Drive and 4th Street produces too formal an effect and unduly emphasizes the importance of the east end of the building. The Commission, therefore, suggest that this part of the plan be restudied with a view toward arranging the elms informally, probably reducing the number.

The Commission will give further consideration to the planting plans after you have made further studies as suggested above. The writer would be glad to go over this matter with you at your convenience.

The Commission gave no consideration to that portion of the general planting plan which covered the area east of 4th Street. There is a question whether or not there is any authority to proceed with work in this area and the Commission, for the present at least, withhold approval of plans in this area.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

GDC:MVL

EXHIBIT A

C O P Y

December 15, 1939.

Memorandum for Mr. Wyeth:

With reference to the program of competition for the ceramics of the Municipal Center Building, the Commission gave careful consideration to the subject at the meeting in New York City on December 14. The Commission decided that it would be the policy of the Commission of Fine Arts hereafter that none of its members will serve on a jury when the final decision concerning a project rests with the Commission of Fine Arts. The Commission suggest that in addition to the jury members mentioned in the first draft of the program, namely, George Harding, Gifford Beal and Duncan Phillips that you as Municipal Architect should serve as Chairman and that either John Gregory or Lee Lawrie serve as the sculptor member of the jury. This is in accordance with the recommendation of Mr. Lanship.

The Commission gave particular consideration to the telegram from Mr. Savage, in which he stated that it seems like an unnecessary complication to require the preparation of colored tile before the awards are made. This part had better be delayed for later specifications to be made by the successful contestant.

Mr. Savage was present at the meeting and again stressed this point. He said further that it would weaken your program of competition to expect each of the five participants to submit samples of tile and it would place undue burden upon them. The Commission of Fine Arts therefore recommend that simply the two successful contestants be requested to submit samples of tile in accordance with the specifications stated in the program of competition.

(Signed) E. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary.

EXHIBIT B

COPY

December 15, 1939.

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on Thursday, December 14, approved a design for an administration building for Bedloes Island as part of the Statue of Liberty improvement project, submitted by Mr. Thomas C. Vint, Chief Architect of your office. The Commission were in conference with Mr. Vint and with the Superintendent of the Statue of Liberty Monument, Mr. Palmer, at the meeting. The Commission recommend that the building be faced with granite to harmonize with the granite base of the Statue of Liberty. If the cost of the granite is found to be prohibitive, the Commission recommend that a flash brick be used, which has a monumental granite appearance. A sample of this brick can be seen in the office of the Commission.

The Commission disapprove the use of concrete facing for the building.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

Hon. A. E. Cammerer,
Director,
National Park Service,
Interior Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

C O P Y

December 16, 1939.

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on December 14, gave consideration to the landscape plan for Columbia Island Plaza, submitted by Mr. Donald L. Kline, landscape architect of your office.

The Commission approved the proposed plan for the roadways at the south end of the plaza to correspond to those at the north end. The Commission concur in the recommendation of your office to leave out the trees in the center panels at both ends of the plaza.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

Chairman.

Hon. A. B. Cammerer,
Director,
National Park Service,
Interior Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
E DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

December 12, 1939.

Memorandum for Mr. H. P. Cammerer,
Secretary, Fine Arts Commission.

Transmitted herewith for submission to the Commission at its meeting December 13 in New York are the following drawings on the Commodore Barney Circle.

1. Landscape plan prepared by the Park and Planning Commission, approved by that agency, the District of Columbia Highway Department, the Public Utilities Commission and the National Park Service.

2. Drawing by the Capital Transit Company showing the alignment of the trolley car loop which is now under construction.

3. Drawing No. N.C.P. 3037, Preliminary Plan for the transfer terminal in this area which it is contemplated will be built by the Capital Transit Company.

This service is submitting this last mentioned drawing for consideration by the Commission. It will be noted this scheme has had tentative approval of the Transit Company, the Coordinating Committee for the District of Columbia and the National Capital Parks.

I realize that the Commission has never been very well satisfied with the General Plan of Commodore Barney Circle, as this service spent considerable time with the chairman over a year ago in search for a more satisfactory solution. However, since the above mentioned scheme has been approved by all agencies concerned, and the construction work is under way by the Transit Company and the District of Columbia Highway Department, it is believed to be too late to remedy the situation.

In view of the above facts and the necessity for the creation of a terminal facility in Barney Circle for transfer from bus to rail and vice versa, it is felt that the scheme submitted for the structure (N.C.P. 3037) has considerable merit for the following reasons.

1. Since the street cars are to be brought directly into the circle it is felt that the long open waiting shed will help the view from the bridge approaching the City from Anacostia in that it tends to give or set a plane against which both the buses and the street cars

are super-imposed and loose a little more of their identity than if the center of the circle were kept completely open. It will also be noted that the camber on the new Pennsylvania Avenue bridge is such that by holding this open shed low enough, the eye level from the center of the brdige will look over this portion of the structure.

2. Furthermore, the fact that the waiting room and comfort facilities which naturally call for a more solid type of architectural handling, have been hdl all on the southwest side of the circle in order to get this element as much out of the view from the bridge and Pennsylvania Avenue, Southeast, as possible. This also allows for a more functional arrangement of the comfort facilities, plumbing and heating, etc.

3. The main reason for submission to the Commission at this time is that from conversation with the Transit Company, they appear willing to build this facility in the near future upon completion of the bridge.

The second submission by this office are the Bureau of Public Roads drawing for Project 6A8 for the road ways on the Memorial Circle and southern portion of Columbia Island, for which money is available. These plans are directly in line with the general plan for development of Columbia Island, also attached which has had, I believe, previous approval by your Commission.

Any comments and criticism the Commission may care to make are welcomed by this office.

Donald L. Kline
Resident Landscape Architect.

Enclosure 1935825.

C O P Y

December 18, 1939.

My dear Mr. Cammerer:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on December 14, considered the landscape plan and design for a bus terminal at Barney Circle, which were submitted by Mr. Donald L. Kline, Landscape Architect of your office. The Commission regret that a better design could not be prepared for this circle as an approach to the new John Philip Sousa Memorial Bridge, which is being built to take the place of the old Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge. However, the Commission recognize the limitations placed by existing conditions at the bridge and therefore approve the plan in principle.

The Commission request that a detailed drawing be submitted of the architecture for the bus terminal, a planting plan, and a general layout of the plaza. The Commission have noted certain desirable changes in the landscape plan, including omission of the fountain and bushes; and instead of planting trees in a semi-circle, it would be better to plant them at the north and south ends of the plaza.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

Hon. A. E. Cammerer,
Director,
National Park Service,
Interior Department,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT E-1

December 18, 1939.

My dear Mr. Eggers:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in New York City on December 14, were pleased to discuss with you the question of a revised design for the Oscar Straus Memorial Fountain and hope that the general suggestions agreed upon for a revised design with an open center and simplified sculptural groups at the ends will be embodied by you in a new drawing.

The Commission felt that Mr. Weinman would cooperate with you in the matter of a new design for the sculpture. Semi-reclining figures were mentioned. However, you and Mr. Weinman can doubtless work out a suitable design. It is, of course, desirable to have the sculpture be such that it will look well from all sides.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

Chairman.

Mr. Otto R. Eggers,
Architect,
542 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

EXHIBIT T

C O P Y

Federal Works Agency
PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION
Washington

December 4, 1939.

Mr. Gilmore D. Clarke,
101 Park Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Gilmore:

Thank you very much indeed for your good letter of November 22. As a matter of fact, I agree entirely with the suggestions in reference to the Lantz models and I am glad you feel that Lantz has succeeded as well as he has and that he should be allowed to go ahead. I am asking Mr. Hopper to keep in close touch with Lantz and I hope he may have the advantage of further good advice from Mr. Manship, Mr. Lawrie and Mr. Weinman.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Edward Bruce,

Chief of the Section of Fine Arts.

EXHIBIT G

Supreme Court of the United States
Washington, D.C.

CHAMBERS OF
JUSTICE HARLAN F. STONE
29 TWENTY-FOURTH STREET, N. W.

December 4, 1939.

Dear Mr. Clarke:

Justice Roberts has asked me, as Chairman of the appropriate committee of the Supreme Court, to answer your letter to him of the 21st ultimo.

In response to your letter, the Court directs me to say that in the event that Congress authorizes the removal of the statue of Chief Justice Marshall from the west terrace of the Capitol, the Court will approve its relocation in the entrance hall of the Supreme Court building, if Congress makes an appropriation to defray the expense of establishing it in its new position under conditions approved by your Commission and the architect of the Capitol.

In taking this action the Court expresses no opinion as to the desirability of removing the statue from its present location.

Yours sincerely,

Harlan F. Stone.

Harlan F. Stone.

EXHIBIT H

Gilmore D. Clarke, Esq.,
Chairman, The Commission of Fine Arts,
Interior Department Building,
Washington, D. C.

C O P Y

December 11, 1939.

Memorandum to Members Commission of Fine Arts:

The members of the Commission will be interested in reading the copy of a letter which Mr. Borie received from the Honorable Frederic A. Delano, dated November twenty-fifth. For the information of the members of the Commission, I attach copy of my letter to Mr. Borie, commenting on the aforementioned communication. It is specially interesting to note the following quotation from Mr. Delano's letter:

> "the purpose of the competition was not to get a final design, but to select an architect."

GILMORE D. CLARKE

GDC:MVL

ENC.

EXHIBIT I

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Washington, D. C.

220 State Dep't Building,
November 25, 1939.

Mr. C. L. Borie, Chairman,
Smithsonian Art Commission,
Architects Building,
17th & Sansom Streets,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

My dear Mr. Borie:

Your letter of November 18 came to me the day before Thanksgiving and I took it home to consider it.

I am sorry that I see no way of meeting with your Commission on the fifth of December. I have obligated myself to go to Florida for a meeting there which will keep me away from Washington for the fourth, fifth and sixth of December. However, as I was not consulted when the date was set, I cannot be held responsible.

In regard to considering the plans which were accepted in the competition provided for by act of Congress, the effect of the competition was to name the Messrs. Saarinen, father and son, as the architects of the proposed gallery, if and when built. As you perhaps recall, the Government is not putting up the money for building this gallery, and Mr. Bruce, I, and others, have as yet had no luck in getting private funds. The attitude of the Commission of Fine Arts also has added to our difficulties. I think it exceeded its authority in stating that the building designed by the Messrs. Saarinen would not be acceptable to it, overlooking the fact that the purpose of the competition was not to get a final design, but to select an architect. Of course it is not for me to say that this matter should not be considered by the Smithsonian Art Commission, and if Dr. Abbot wishes to consider it, he is naturally at liberty to bring it up for discussion.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Frederic A. Delano

C O P Y

Gig Harbor, Washington, Dec. 1939.

Dear Major Clarke:

A notice from the Cosmos Club indicates that the Government is about to purchase the Club property in order to carry the Treasury Annex up to H Street. When the Commission of Fine Arts joined issue with Secretary McAdoo over a heating plant for the head of the Washington Channel we were defeated signally at both ends of the Avenue. President Wilson would not be approached; but when it came to building the Treasury Annex he warned Secretary McAdoo not to get into further trouble with the Commission. So McAdoo asked Gilbert, who had led the fight to design the Annex. When the question of fee came up Gilbert told McAdoo he could fix that to suit himself--even no fee. The object was to establish for Lafayette Square a building recognizing the dominance of the White House over an area to be framed by public buildings according to the Park Commission plans. McAdoo then cooperated with Gilbert to scheme a building with the capacity required by Congress. This meant a sub-basement and a pent-house roof behind a balustrade. It fixed the cornice line, repeated in the Chamber of Commerce building, after a struggle with that body's building committee. Meantime, Gilbert sketched a complete building for the east side, accommodating it to the eight feet rise in grade. Now, would it not be well to get from Simon or the Gilbert office (or both) those plans to guide the Commission in what probably will be a struggle over the cornice line. Moreover, there is the State Department of the future on the west side of Lafayette Square to be considered.

Yours,
(Signed) Charles Moore.

EXHIBIT J